

**Suggested Notes for a Possible Speech by the Vice President**

1. Compared with 18 months ago (before the introduction of U.S. forces), the situation in South Vietnam has improved significantly.

2. The military situation, which was then deteriorating rapidly, has been stabilized.

a. The buildup of Free World forces has thwarted the Communist aim of achieving equilibrium, which they had almost attained in 1965.

b. Although the Communists are still reinforcing by infiltrating troops from the north, their buildup has not kept pace with ours.

c. U.S. and Vietnamese forces have regained the initiative, and have been able to keep the enemy's major forces off balance.

d. The U.S. bombing attacks in North Vietnam, along the infiltration routes to the south, and on enemy base areas in the south have slowed the development of enemy capabilities.

3. The stabilization of the military situation has taken the pressure off the GVN, providing a breathing spell for the development of programs related to the "other war".

a. Since the Honolulu conference a new focus is being placed on economic, social and political programs necessary to permit effective pacification and offer an attractive alternative to the Viet Cong.

b. Pacification concepts have been refined, and programs developed to extend government authority back into areas which had come under the influence of Communist terrorism.

c. Some progress has already been achieved in consolidating the government's position in rural areas and extending its influence -- 55% of the populace are now living in areas under GVN control.

d. The political situation has been stabilized -- the GVN has weathered the major crisis this spring and effectively maintained its position in the face of opposition from militant Buddhist elements.

e. The lack of popular support for that "struggle movement" and the large turnout in the elections for the Constituent Assembly indicate that the people of Vietnam are eager to give the present government a chance to work out the political institutions necessary to ensure the creation of a viable, independent government in South Vietnam. On the elections, the fact that 4.2 million Vietnamese participated by voting despite the Viet Cong threats, directives and pressures is a fact of great importance. These 4.2 million voters constituted over 80% of the registered electorate. More than that, they constituted well over half the total adult population of South Vietnam -- and this means everyone, including the Viet Cong and their alleged supporters. When over half of a country's people participate in its government's political process, that government cannot be as narrowly based or unpopular (or its opponents as strong) as many critics of our Vietnam policy would have you believe.

4. While the situation is favorable and progress is being made, we cannot expect miracles and an early end to the war.

a. The Communist leaders in Hanoi have shown no willingness to end their aggression, and appear determined to carry on the war regardless of the cost.

b. Much of what we have achieved in the past 18 months has been aimed largely at establishing the foundation for future progress. We have checked the momentum of the Communist advance, but have not yet begun to roll them back with a momentum of our own.

c. Our effort will begin to gain momentum in the months ahead, as the growing superiority of our military power is brought to bear, and as the programs whose foundation has been laid begin to bear fruit, and as the Vietnamese progress toward creating permanent political institutions.

5. Much remains to be done, even as momentum is gained, it will take time to attain our goals.

a. Militarily, it will take time to throw back the enemy's forces, to flush them out of the jungle, and to neutralize or destroy their military capabilities; we cannot expect to destroy in a day what they have been building for years.

b. With respect to pacification, we must build slowly and solidly, so that we do not over-extend and leave the rural populace vulnerable to subversion and terrorism; the Communist subversive apparatus must be rooted out carefully and thoroughly in order for the people to live in freedom from fear and retaliation.

c. Politically, it will take time for the GVN to create a new, freely chosen government, to establish new institutions, and to gain confidence and pride in those institutions -- we must remember that it was many years after our own revolution before we evolved the political system which we enjoy today, even in an environment free from external aggression and Communist subversion.

6. So, patience must be our keyword.

a. Patience is an old-fashioned virtue, one which we Americans tend to ignore.

b. The Orientals, however, prize patience -- it is one of the highest virtues in Oriental culture.

c. Our enemies are betting we will not have the patience to endure until our efforts gain the necessary momentum to ensure the defeat of their aggression.

d. I am betting they are wrong -- because I am confident that our programs are just and I have faith that that other old-fashioned virtue -- one we Americans value highly -- determination to see a thing through to the end -- will triumph over our impatience.